

CAW Contingent Faculty Survey Results for  
Art Education, Art History, and Studio Art/Design Faculty

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## Summary

In the fall of 2010, the Coalition on the Academic Workforce (CAW) conducted a 20,000 person survey of contingent faculty to better understand the working conditions for these types of academic faculty. This report analyzes a subset of this survey, looking only at respondents who indicated that they work in the fields of art history, art education, or studio art/design. In all cases, respondents hold contingent positions off the tenure track, including full-time, non-tenure-track faculty; part-time or adjunct faculty; and graduate student teaching assistants.

## Data

The subset of the CAW data used for this analysis contains 1,034 contingent faculty respondents. Within this subset, 326 respondents identified their field as art history, 138 as art education, and 570 as studio art/design. As a whole, the sample is generally well balanced, however, there are a few missing demographic areas. Figures 25 – 30 show barplots of respondents' self-reported demographic information. As the figures indicate, the majority of the sample is between 25 and 65 years old, which is as expected, and the number of women respondents is more than twice that of men (68% to 29%). Additionally, nearly 86% of the sample identifies as white, while only 1% and 2% of respondents identify as black or hispanic, respectively. These imbalances may be representative of the true population of contingent faculty, however, given that the original survey was comprised of volunteer respondents, it is unclear whether or not that is the case<sup>1</sup>.

Figures 1 – 30 show results for most of the questions included in the CAW survey. When reading the barplots and boxplots that make up these figures, it is important to keep a few things in mind. First, in all but a few noted cases, the columns should sum to 100%. This means that — ignoring the colored subsets — you can compare the frequency of each category by simply comparing the heights of the bars. Second, when taking the subfields into account the relative sizes of the bars for each subfield can be compared, though the charts do not specifically identify the percent of each subfield that is in each category. Thus, in figure 1, for example, comparing the sizes of the green art history bars tells us that approximately five times as many art history faculty members are part-time instructors as are graduate student instructors. Finally, when reading the boxplots (figure 8, for example), the rectangular box represents the range of values from the 25th through the 75th percentile. The horizontal black line within each box identifies the mean value. These figures are useful in that they allow not only for comparisons of the mean values but also of the distribution of data as a whole.

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<sup>1</sup>This by no means invalidates the responses from this survey, but it is important to keep in mind when assessing the results. Specifically, it makes it difficult to know if this survey can be generalized to the broader population of contingent faculty.

# Key Findings

## Institutions and Courses

A number of the questions on the CAW survey shed light on the institutions that hire contingent faculty, including information about the courses these faculty members teach. Figure 1 shows that for all art subfields, 89% of respondents work part-time at one or more institutions while only 3% work full-time off the tenure-track. Similarly, figure 2 shows that nearly 70% of respondents teach at one institution, which suggests only a minority of respondents are able to combine multiple part-time teaching jobs to equal full-time hours. Figure 3 shows the variation in the number of classes that respondents teach. As the figure shows, the large majority of respondents teach three classes or fewer. These results relate to figure 15, which suggests that around 70% of all respondents are limited in the number of classes they can teach per term. Only around 15% of respondents expressed certainty that they could teach as many classes as they desired. Finally, only around 30% of respondents indicated they were represented by a union at the institution where they teach.

## Compensation

Table 1 shows payment levels for a variety of subgroups within the data. Each row represents a different subgroup within the data. The first row is the baseline comparison for the original CAW data, including all subfields, whether they are in the arts, humanities, social sciences, or hard sciences. The first column of table 1 identifies the specific subgroup that corresponds to the payment levels on that row, the next two columns show the mean and median values of payment, and the final two columns show the payment levels for the 25th and 75th percentiles.

Table 1: Payment Level Per Course

| <i>Respondent Subgroup</i> | <i>Mean Pay</i> | <i>Median Pay</i> | <i>25th Percentile</i> | <i>75th Percentile</i> |
|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Full CAW Sample            | \$3,268         | \$2,800           | \$1,980                | \$4,000                |
| All CAA Subfields          | \$3,404         | \$3,000           | \$2,160                | \$4,000                |
| Art History                | \$3,611         | \$3,000           | \$2,200                | \$4,000                |
| Art Education              | \$3,196         | \$2,800           | \$1,888                | \$3,750                |
| Studio Art/Design          | \$3,340         | \$3,000           | \$2,100                | \$4,100                |
| CAA Union Member           | \$3,300         | \$3,000           | \$2,184                | \$4,000                |
| CAA Non-Union Member       | \$3,262         | \$3,000           | \$2,200                | \$4,000                |
| CAA Male                   | \$3,390         | \$3,000           | \$2,249                | \$4,157                |
| CAA Female                 | \$3,444         | \$3,000           | \$2,160                | \$4,000                |

Figures 8 – 12 show the distribution of income broken down visually by art subfield, race, gender, and age. When looking at these plots, it is important to remember the underlying demographic holes in the data. For example, in figure 9, which is a subset by race, the number of respondents identifying as black or Hispanic is quite small and thus there is a large amount of uncertainty about the quality of the estimates. A similar problem exists for the lowest and highest age ranges. Problems aside, however, there seems to be little variation in the mean payment level across these demographic variables. Though there is some variation in the 25th through 75th percentile ranges, it is unclear whether this is a result of the demographic differences or sheer randomness stemming from the volunteer sampling method. In addition, figure 17 shows distribution of payments for courses by union status. The distribution looks relatively normal, with a small skew to the right side. Interestingly, there seems to be no correlation between representation by a union and the level of payment, as shown by the fairly stable ratio of union members to nonunion members for each bar in the plot.

## Benefits and Resources

There is a wide variety of potential benefits and resources that institutions offer to their instructors' and a goal of the initial survey was to assess whether contingent faculty received access to these benefits. Figure 13, for example, shows that over 65% of the contingent faculty respondents indicated that they do not receive health, retirement, or other types of benefits for the courses that they teach. Similarly, only around 17% receive health benefits, 17% receive retirement benefits, and 6% receive other benefits<sup>2</sup>. Figure 14 shows the distribution of these same types of benefits by age. Interestingly, the relative proportion of instructors receiving each type of benefit is fairly stable across each age range, however, the percent not receiving benefits decreases as age increases. This stems partially from the larger proportion of younger instructors in the sample, but may also be indicative of the reason there are fewer older instructors to begin with: absent benefits, many may move on to other professions that are more supportive.

Figures 18 and 19 display responses for other types of profession-specific resources. For these questions, respondents could mark all choices that applied to their situation, so each column should be taken as its own. Thus, in figure 18, the first column shows that around 16% of all respondents indicated that they receive photocopying privileges from their institution(s), for example. figure 20 shows the percent of respondents who are eligible for unemployment through their institution. Interestingly, many respondents indicated they were uncertain about their eligibility, while only 12% responded that they know they are eligible.

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<sup>2</sup>Respondents were allowed to select all benefits that they received, which is why the percentages sum to greater than 100%.

## Occupation

Given the nature of contingent work, a final series of questions probed respondents about their primary occupation. Figure 4 suggests that many instructors teach for a few years and then decide to change professions. As the figure shows, the length of time respondents have been teaching steadily increases until the three- to five-year range, at which point the proportion begins to shrink. Furthermore, figure 5 shows that around 80% of respondents view teaching as their primary occupation. Figures 6 and 7, however, indicate that only around 40% of respondents are actively seeking a tenure-track position, but 60% would accept such a position at their current institution if offered. Finally, figures 21 – 24 show further data on how respondents view and identify their primary occupations.

## Conclusion

Overall, compared to the complete set of survey respondents, art history, art education, and studio art/design faculty respondents are quite similar. There are, however, a few key differences. The median pay per course for the College Art Association (CAA) subset is approximately \$300 higher than for the complete sample. This may be a result of the different types of institutions where CAA faculty work, but it is interesting nonetheless. In contrast, despite a higher median pay per course, the CAA faculty reported significantly lower levels of resources and benefits provided by their institutions (figures 17 and 18) than the full sample did. In many cases, the reported level for CAA faculty was two to three times lower. This is even more striking considering the overall level of support reported by the entire sample is low to begin with. Finally, though teaching loads were fairly similar across all respondents, CAA faculty appear to be marginally more likely to have been teaching part-time for three or more years, to accept (or probably accept) a tenure-track offer from their current institution, and to have interest in seeking or to have previously sought a tenure-track offer.

As more subset data is analyzed in the CAW survey by other researchers and associations the results will be posted on the CAW site. New research and advocacy efforts regarding contingent faculty are posted on a continual basis on the CAW and CAA<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup><http://www.collegeart.org/resources/contingentfaculty>

Figure 1: What is your employment status in post-secondary education in fall 2010?  
Section 2, Question 1

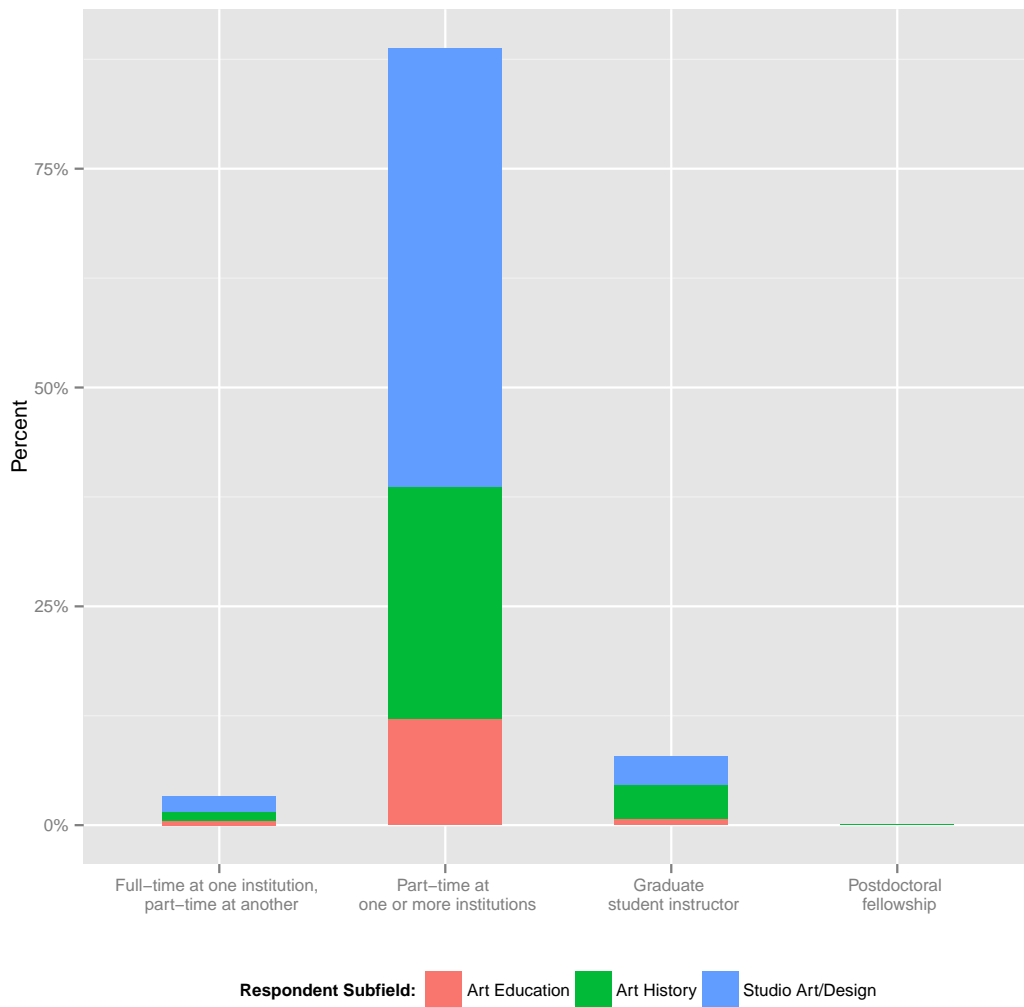


Figure 2: At how many institutions of higher education are you teaching in the fall term 2010?  
Section 2, Question 2

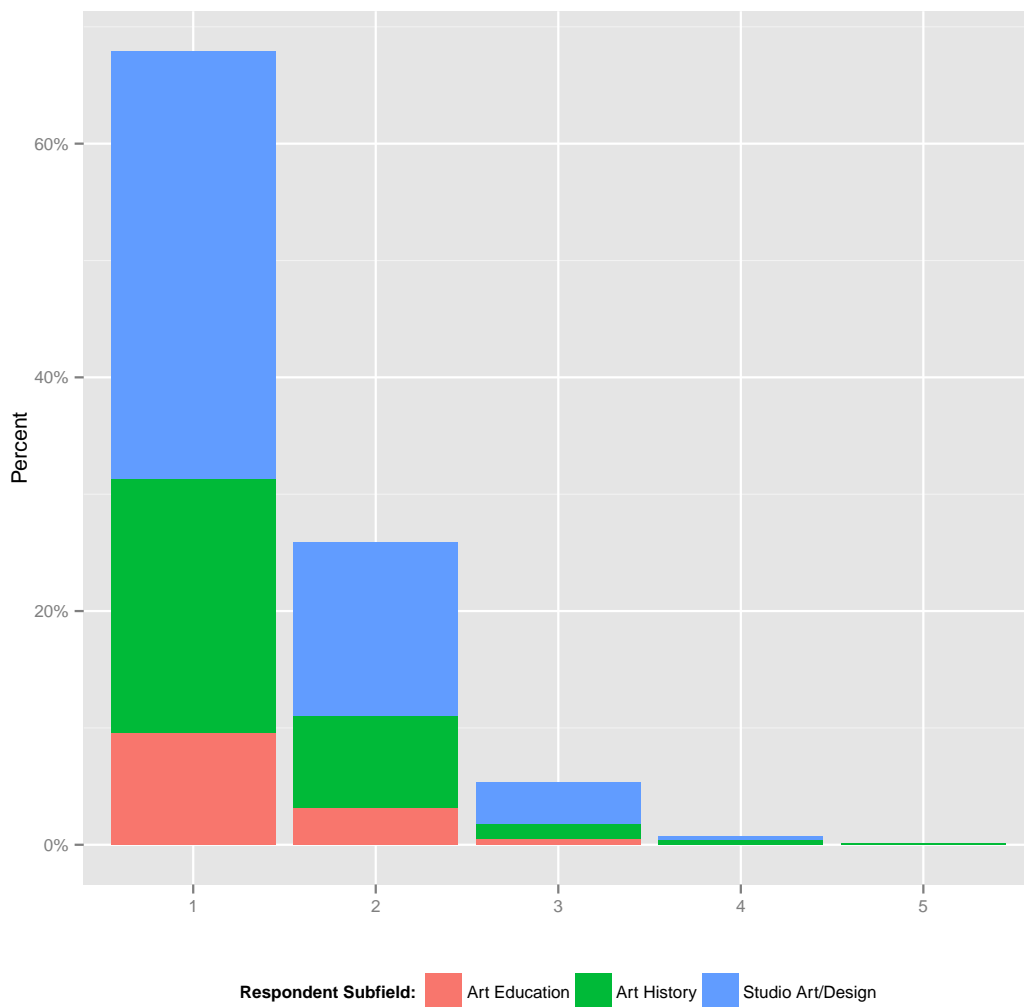


Figure 3: How many classes/sections for credit are you teaching in the fall term 2010?  
Section 2, Question 3

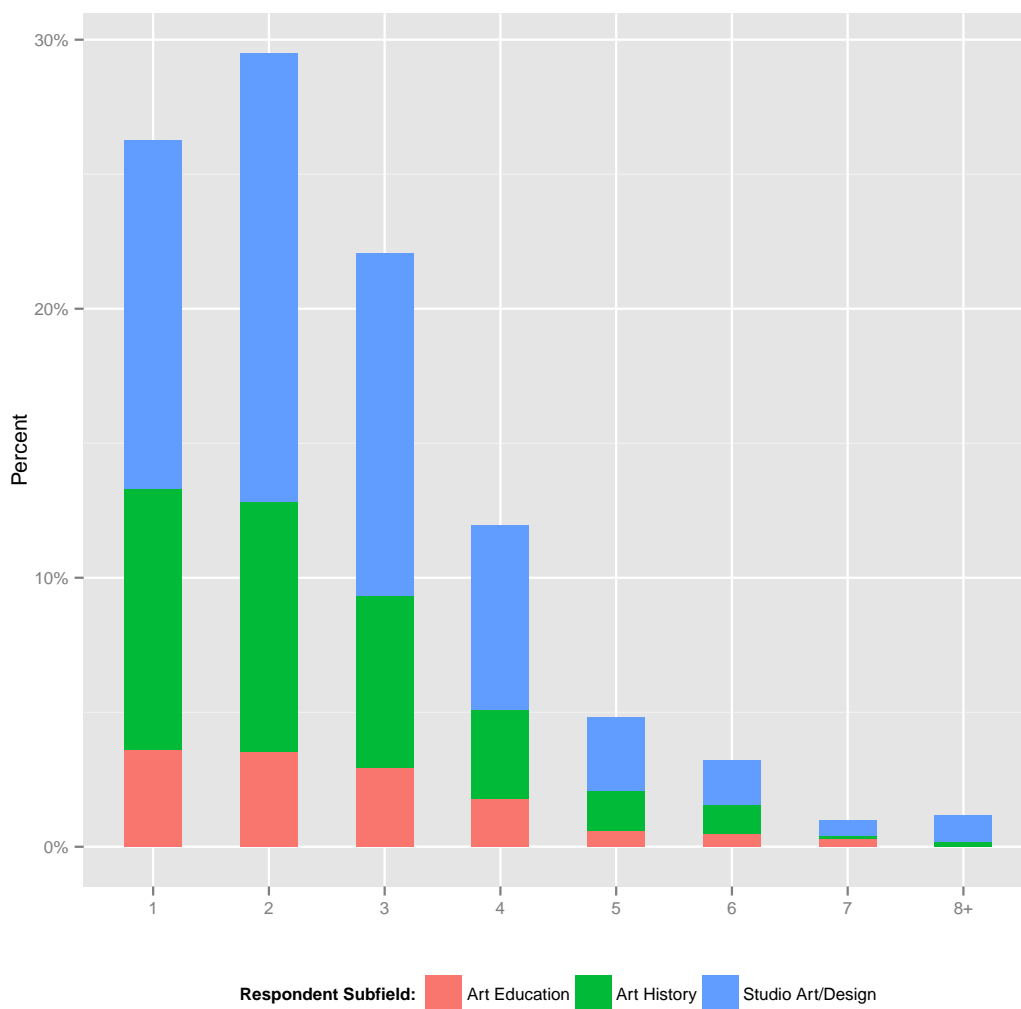




Figure 4: How many years have you been teaching in higher education as a contingent faculty member?  
Sections 3 and 4, Question 1

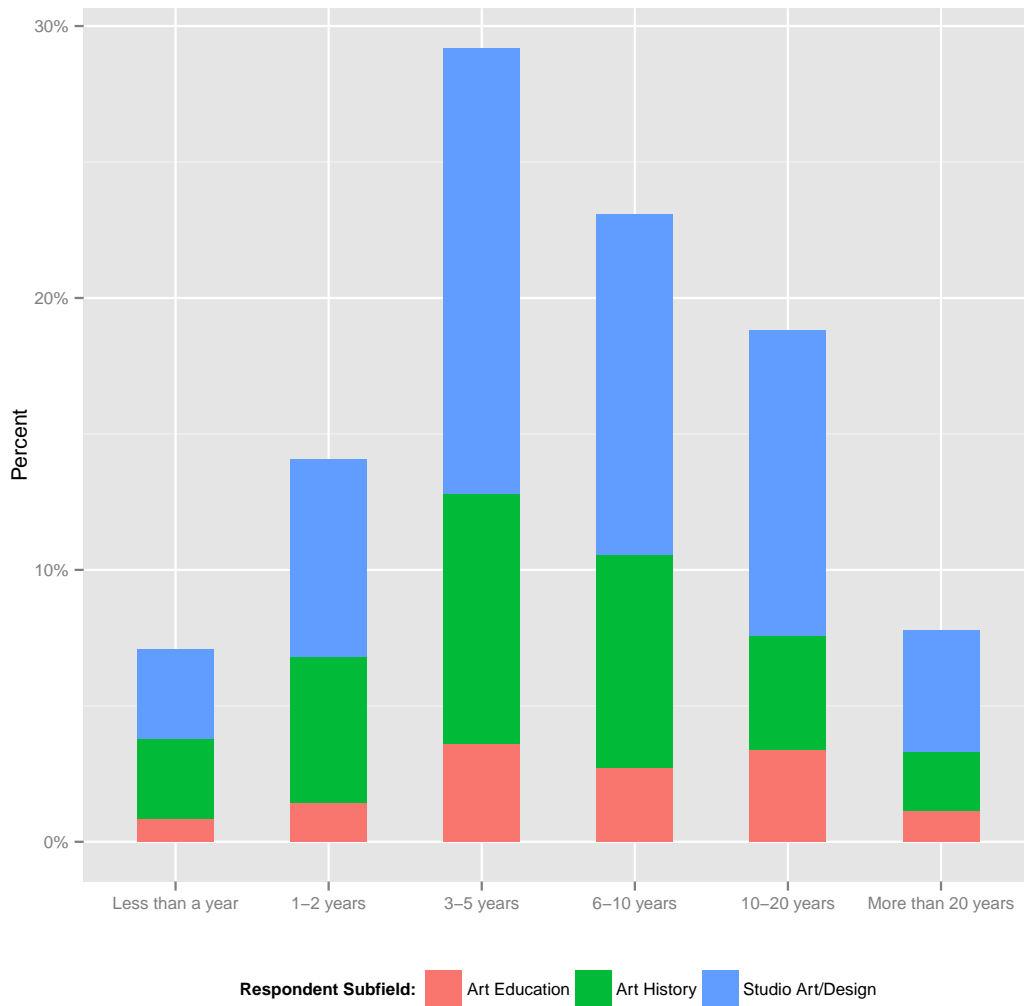


Figure 5: Do you consider teaching in higher education as a contingent faculty member your primary employment?  
Sections 3 and 4, Question 2

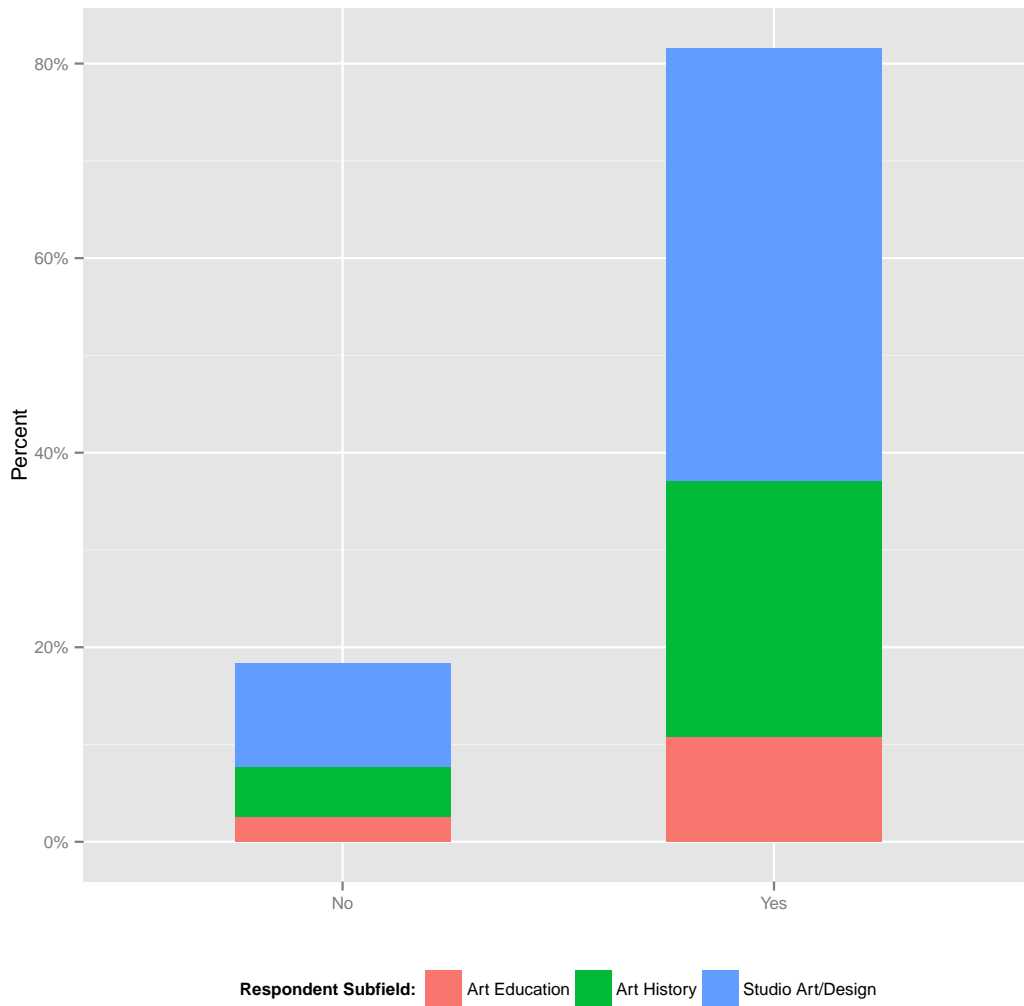


Figure 6: Are you actively seeking a full-time tenure track position?  
Sections 3 and 4, Question 3

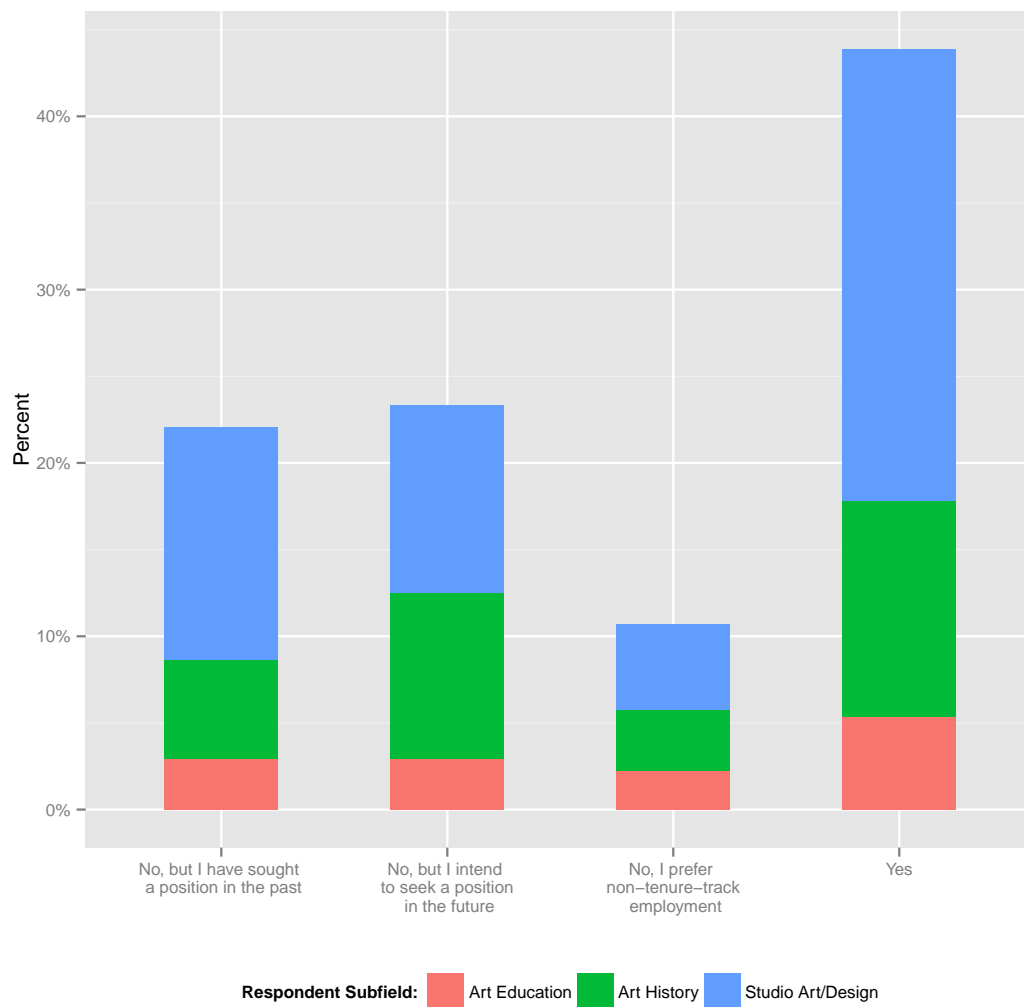


Figure 7: If offered, would you accept a full-time, tenure-track position at an institution where you are currently teaching?

Sections 3 and 4, Question 4

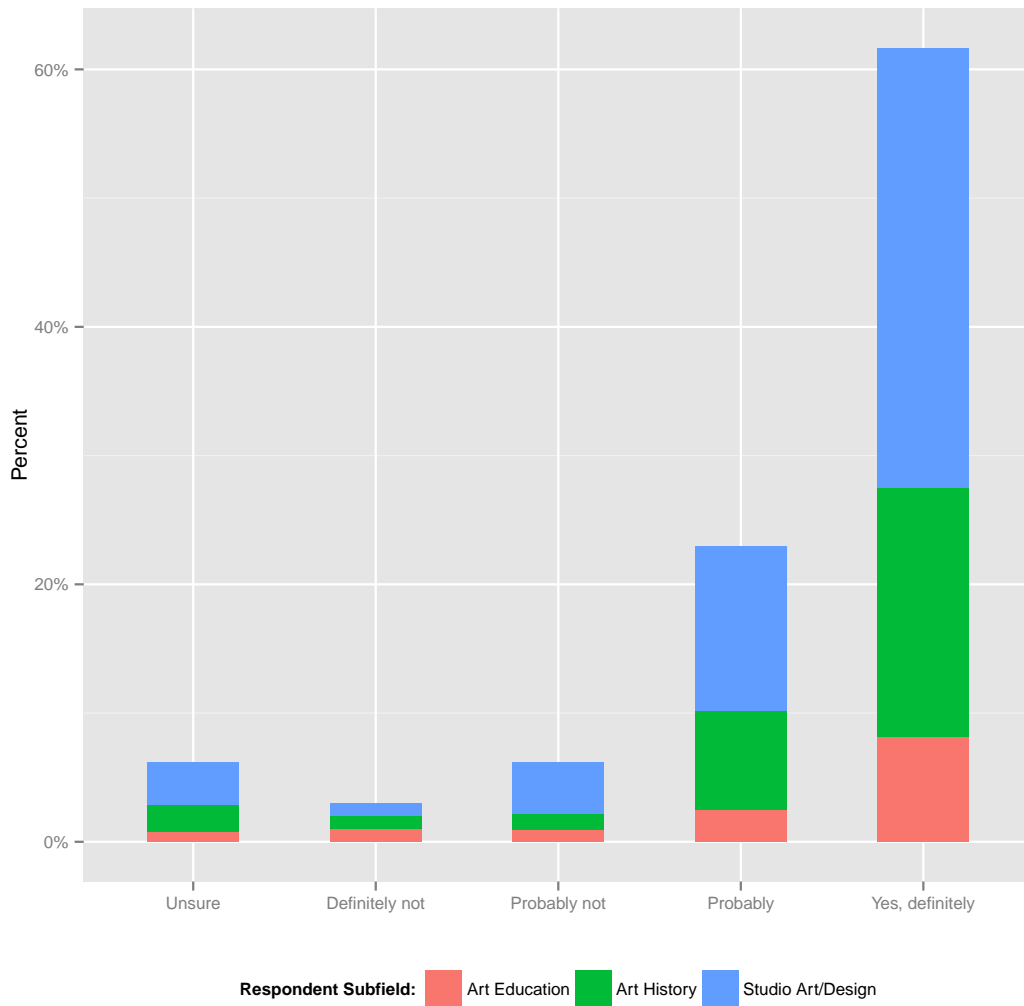
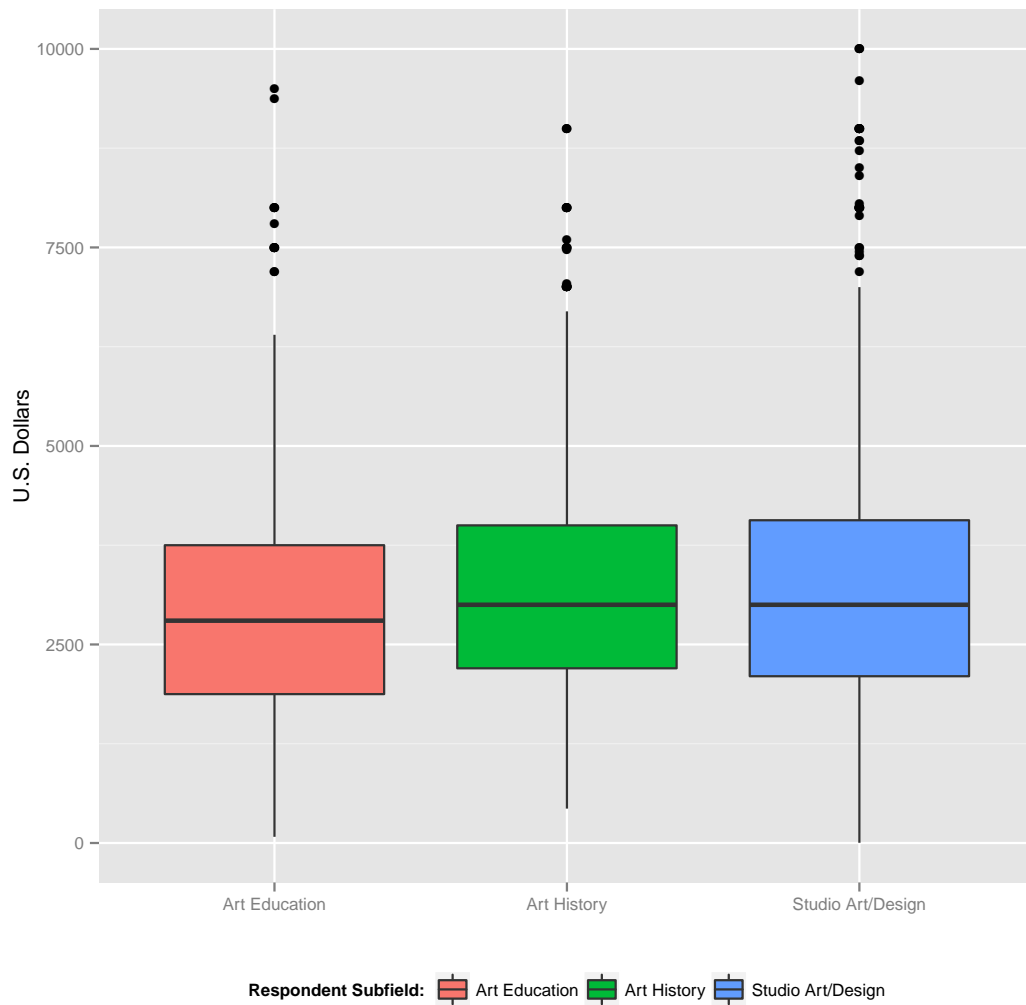
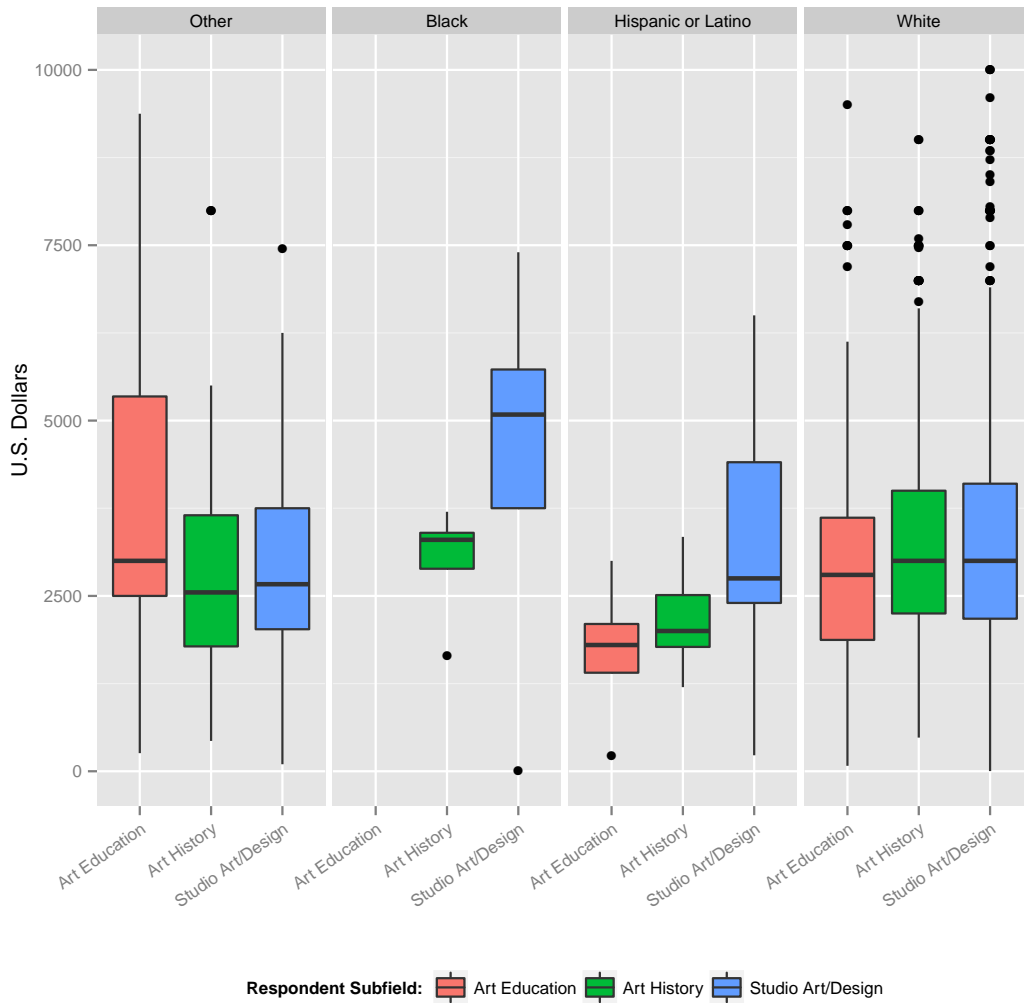


Figure 8: Payment for individual courses and sections  
Sections 5 – 10, Question 6



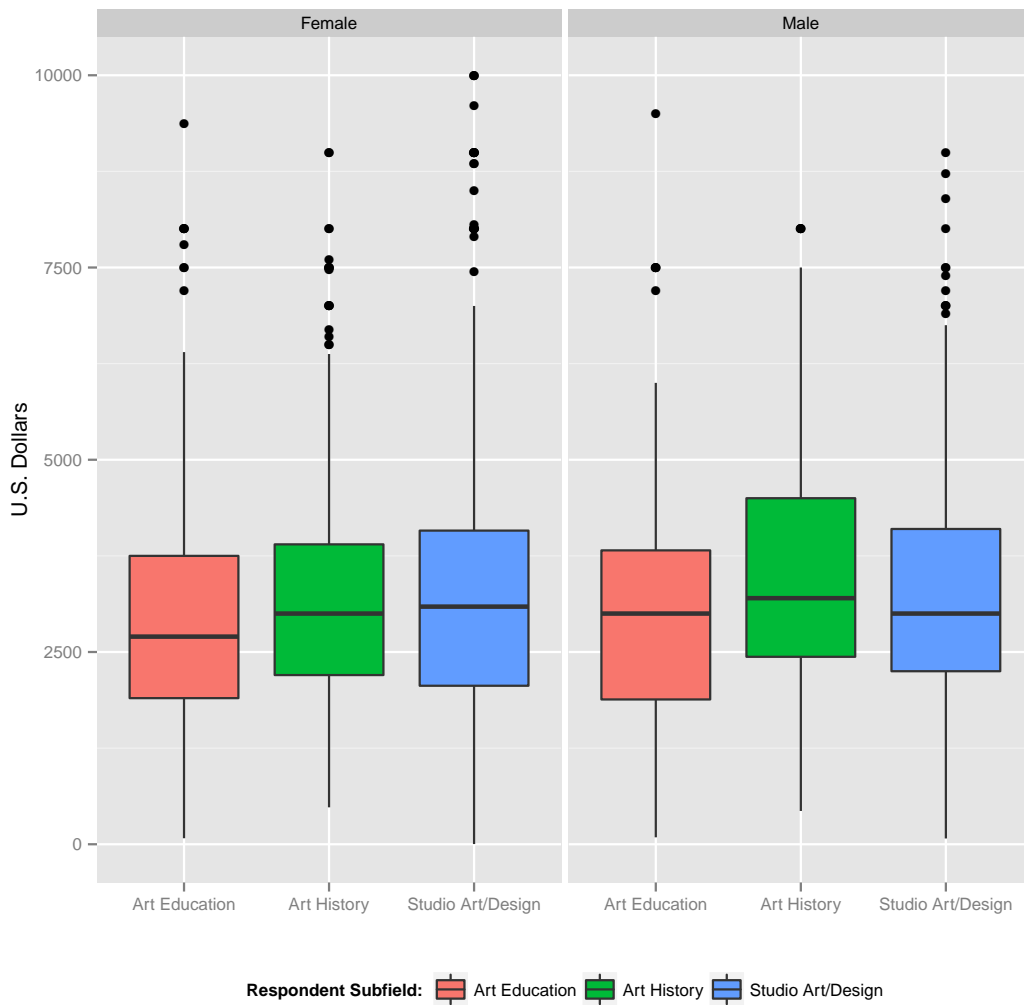
Note: 22 outlier responses above \$10,000 were excluded from this plot.

Figure 9: Payment for individual courses and sections by race  
 Sections 5 – 10, Question 6



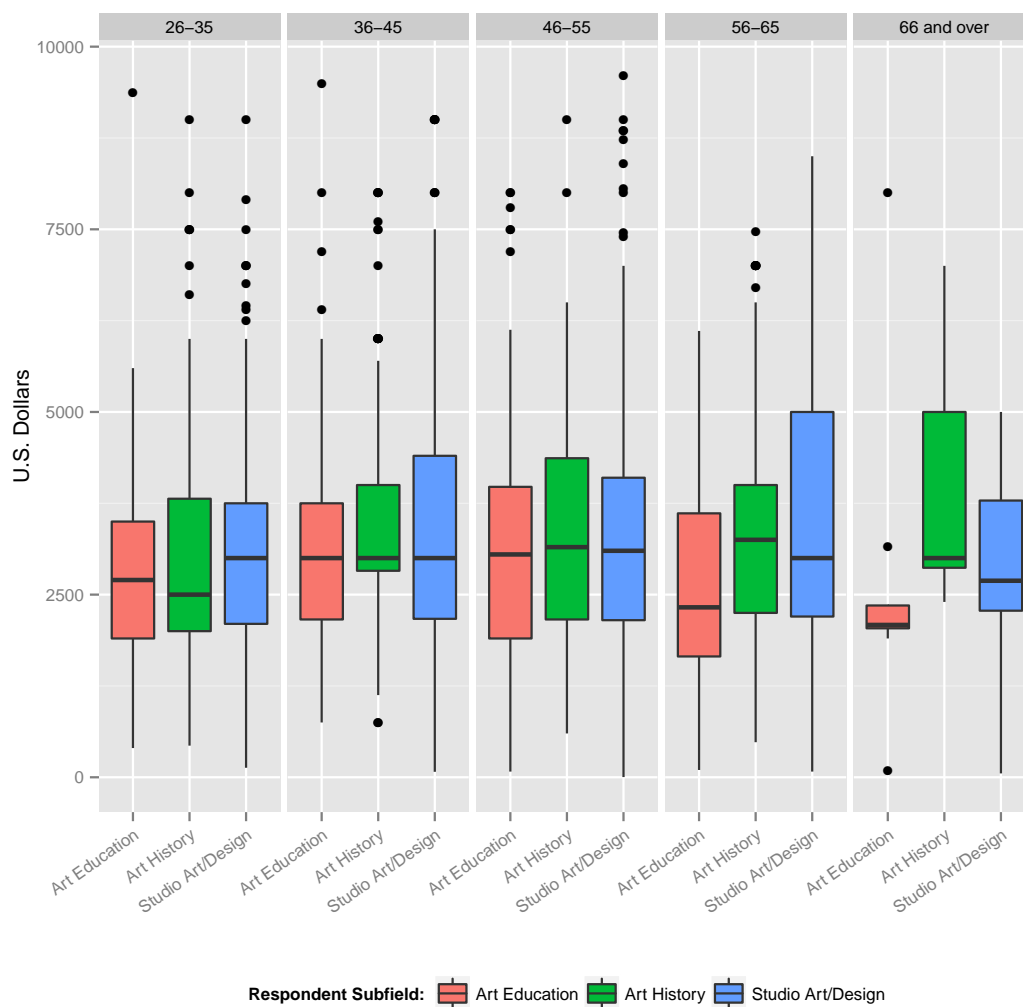
Note: 22 outlier responses above \$10,000 were excluded from this plot.

Figure 10: Payment for individual courses and sections by gender  
 Sections 5 – 10, Question 6



Note: 22 outlier responses above \$10,000 were excluded from this plot.

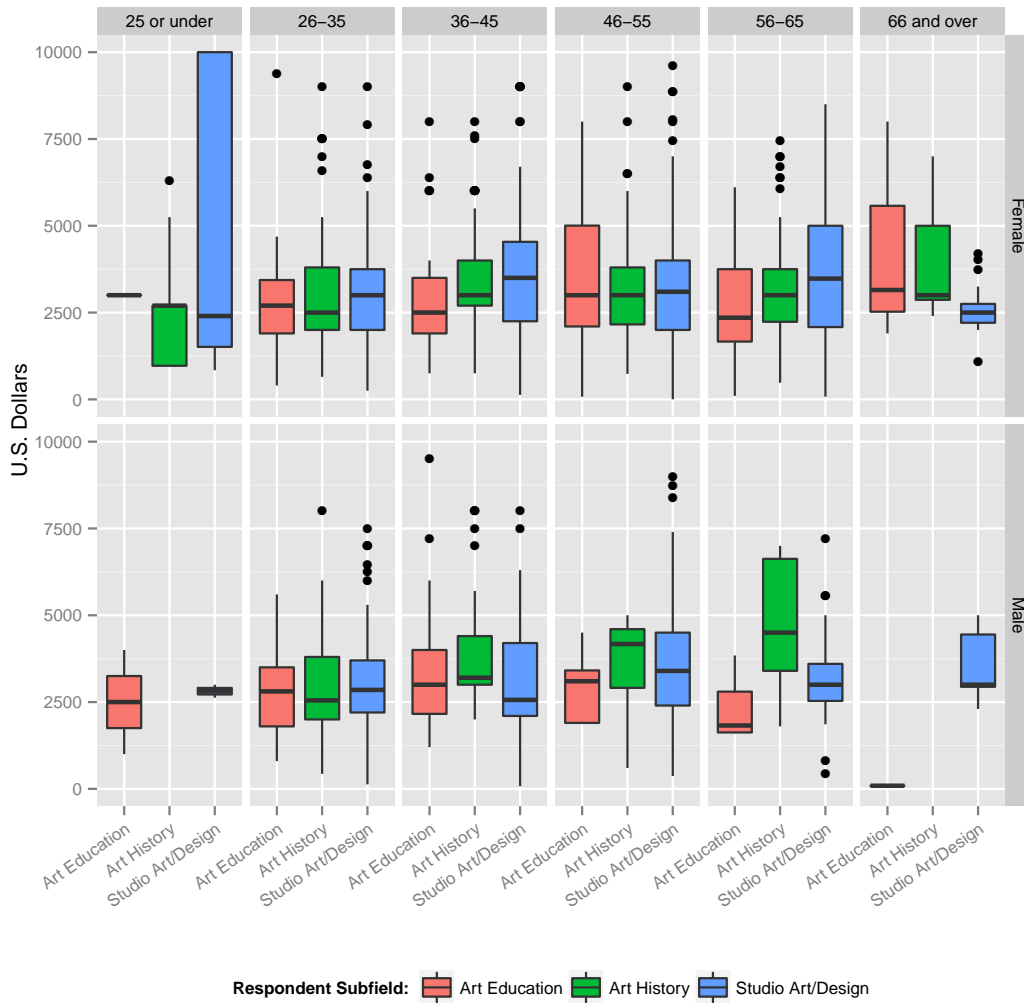
Figure 11: Payment for individual courses and sections by age  
 Sections 5 – 10, Question 6



Note: 22 outlier responses above \$10,000 were excluded from this plot



Figure 12: Payment for individual courses and sections by age and gender  
 Sections 5 – 10, Question 6



Note: 22 outlier responses above \$10,000 were excluded from this plot.

Figure 13: Do you receive any benefits from the institution where you teach this course?  
 Sections 5 – 10, Question 11

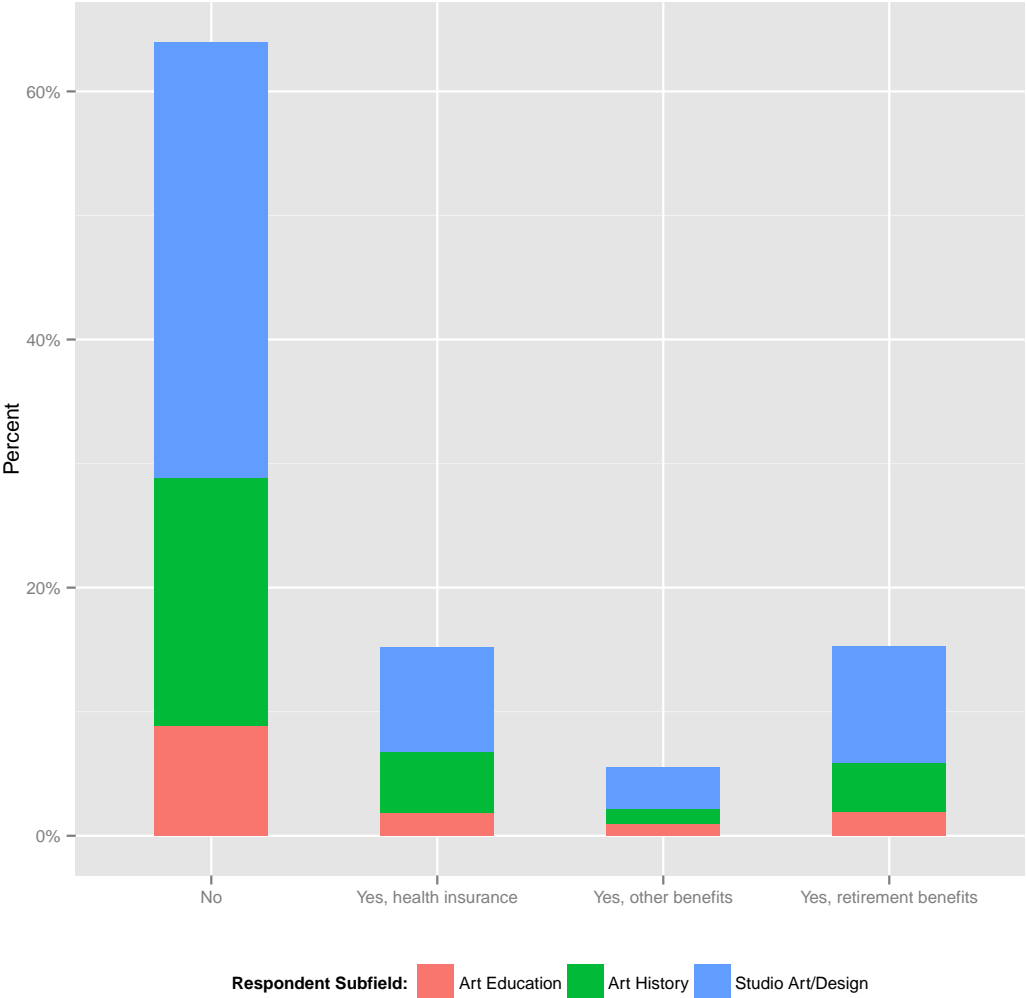


Figure 14: Do you receive any benefits from the institution where you teach this course? By age  
 Sections 5 – 10, Question 11

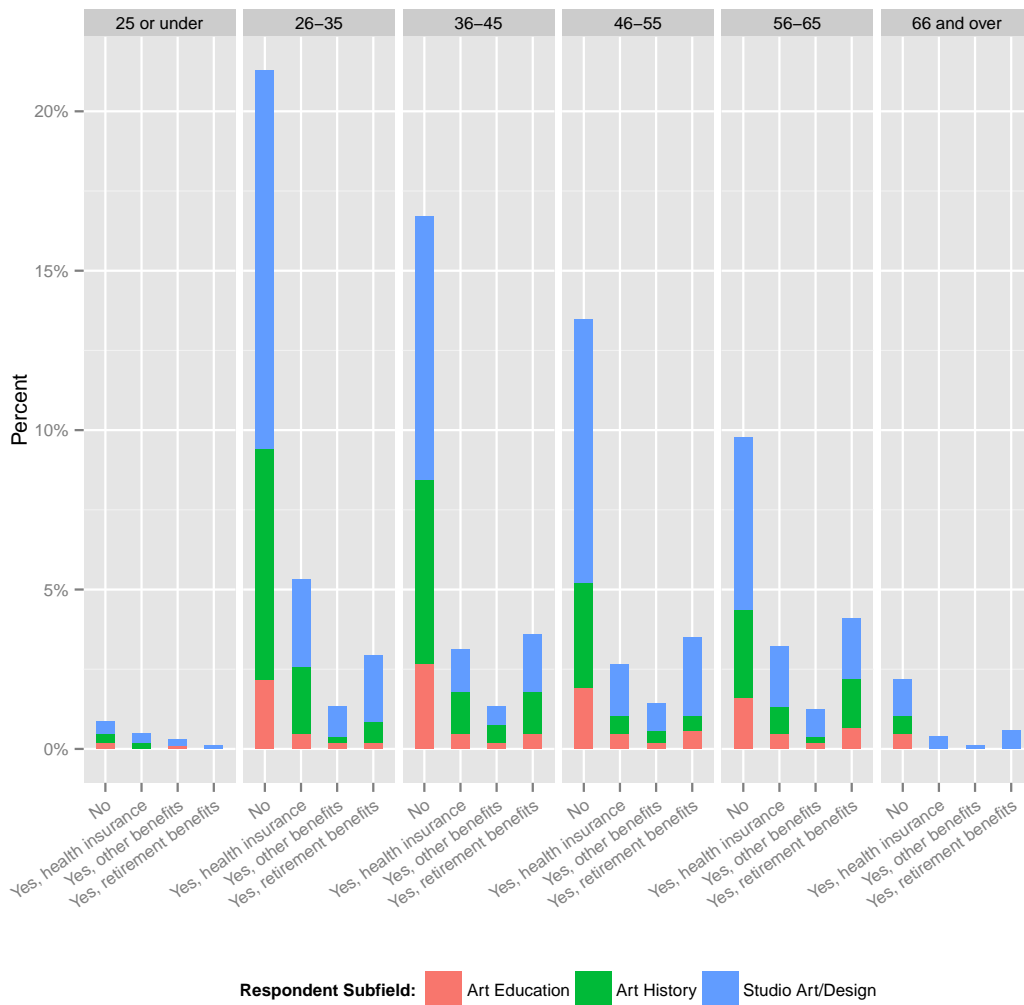


Figure 15: Are you limited in the number of courses you can teach per term?  
Sections 5 – 10, Question 13

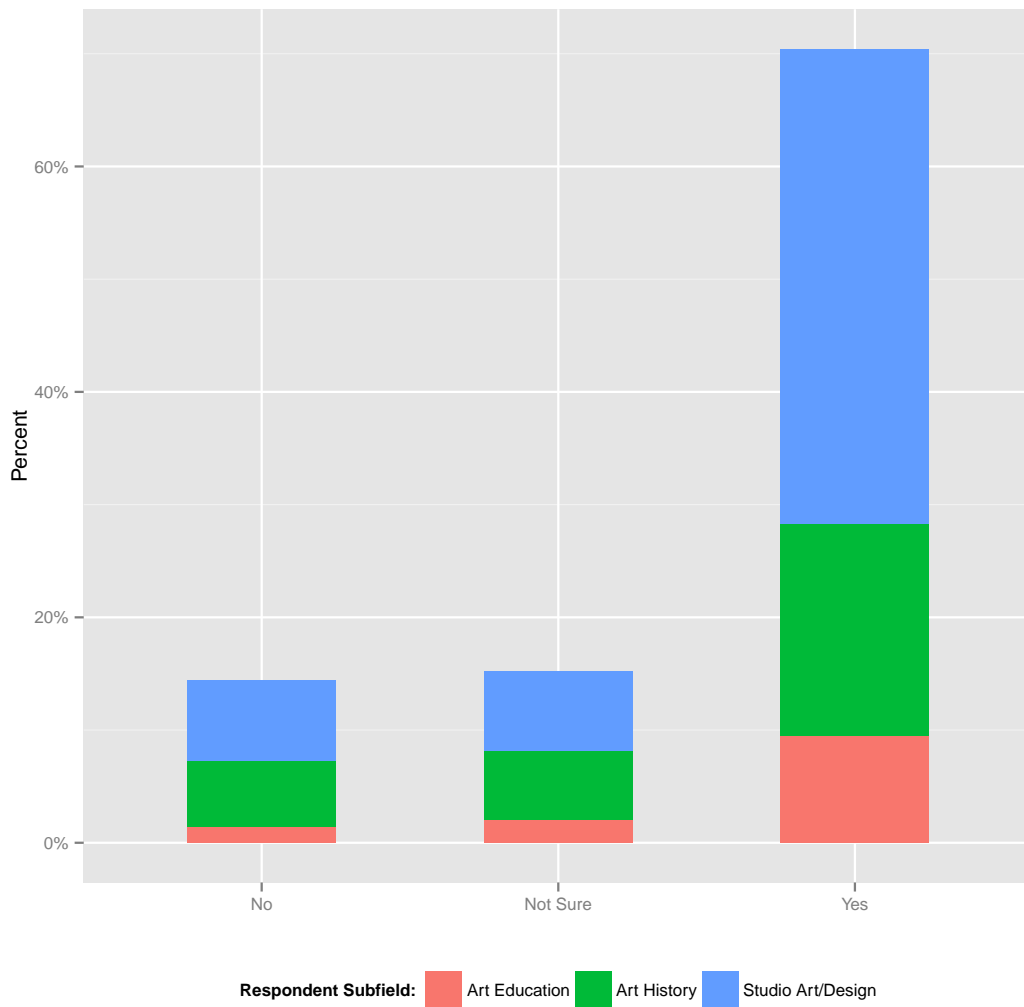


Figure 16: Are you represented by a union or collective bargaining unit at this institution?  
Sections 5 – 10, Question 14

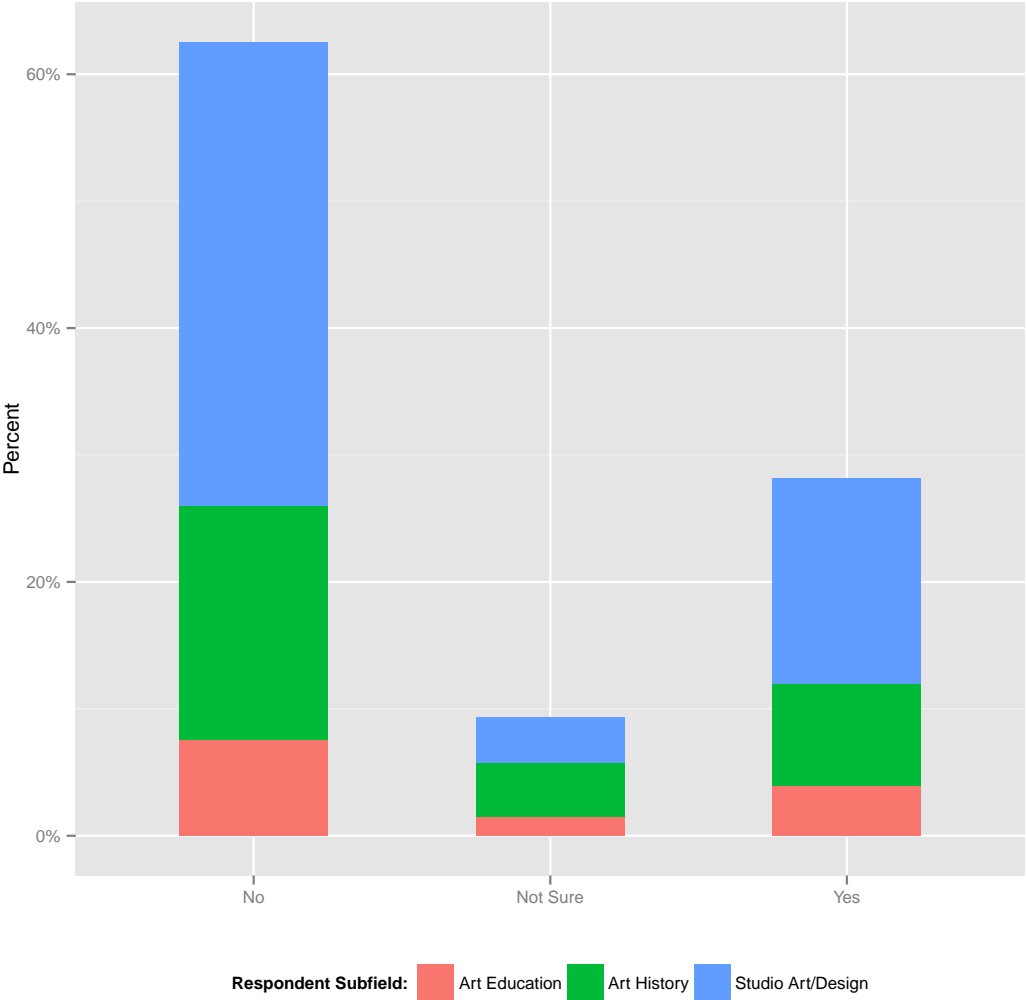


Figure 17: Payment for individual courses and sections by union status  
Sections 5 – 10, Questions 6 and 14

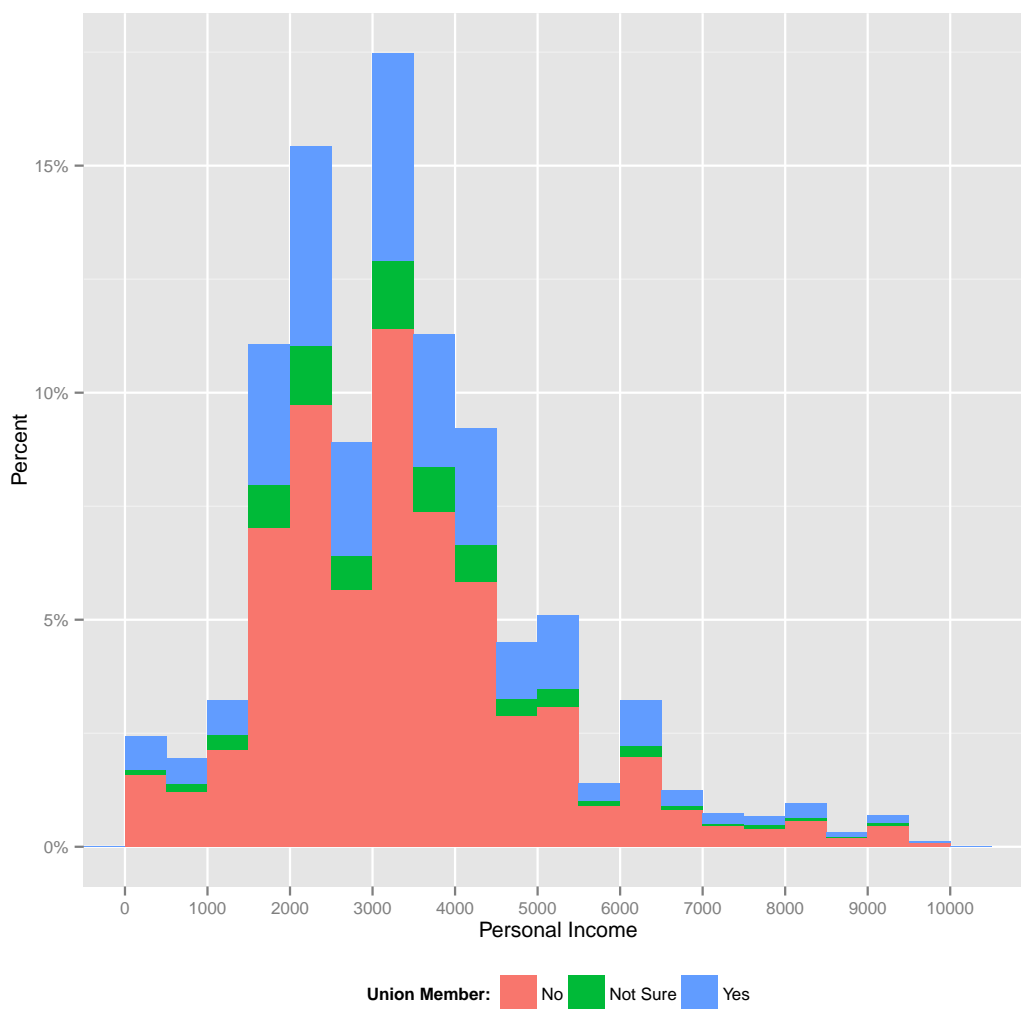


Figure 18: Please indicate the resources provided by one or more of your academic employers  
 Section 14, Question 1

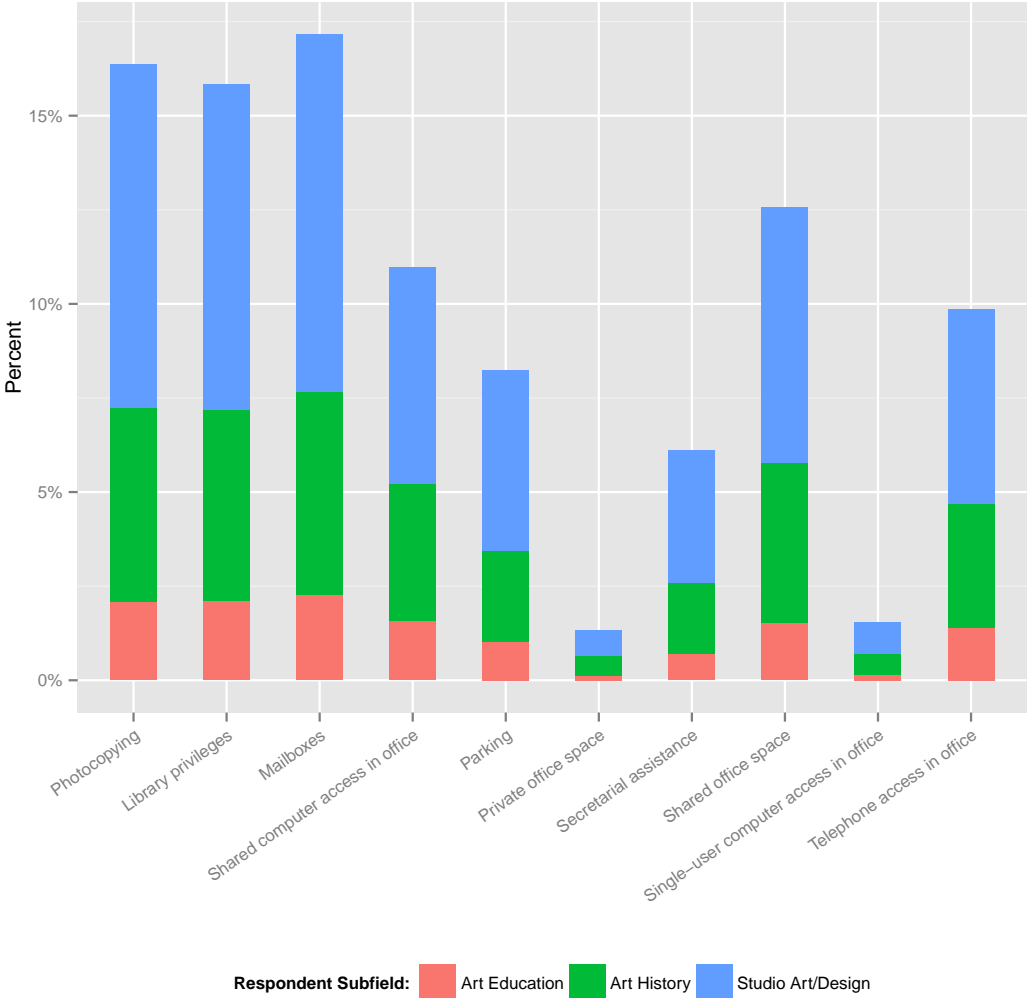


Figure 19: Which of the following working conditions describe your contingent instructional position?  
 Section 14, Question 2

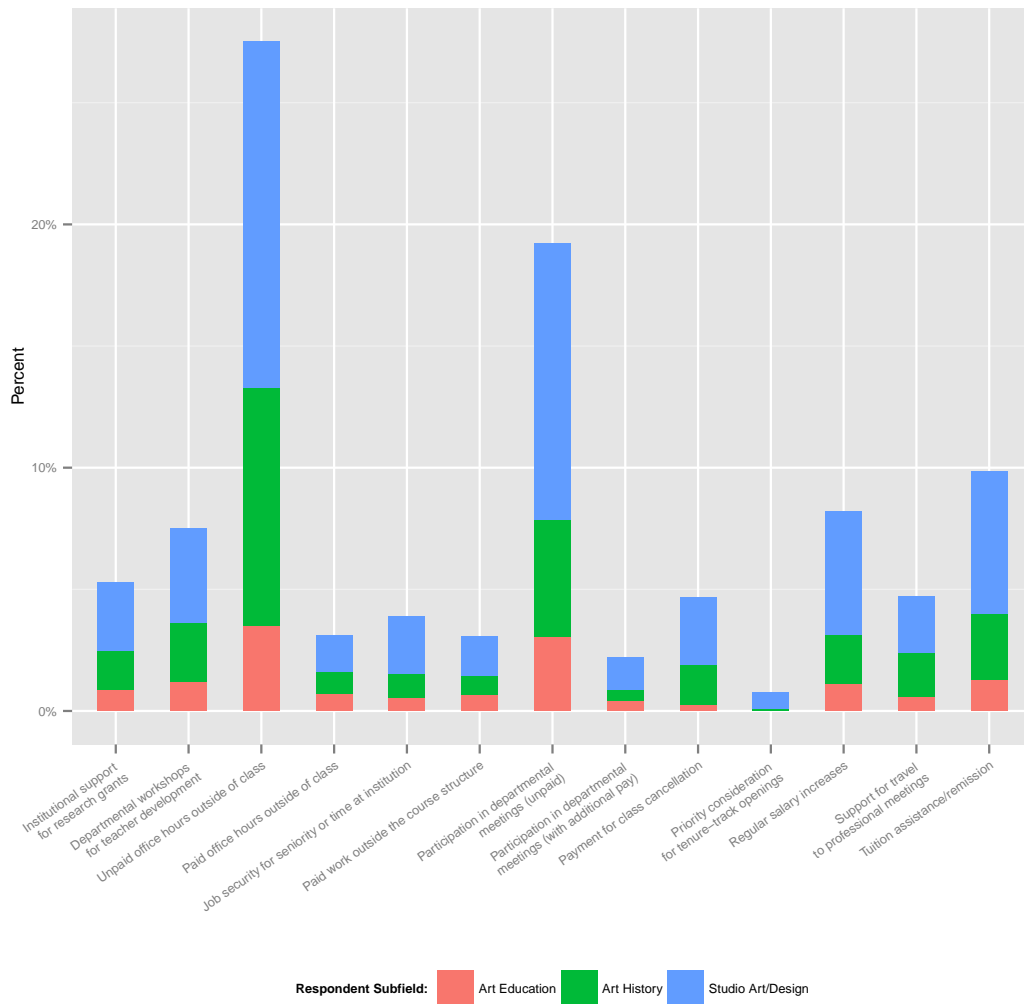




Figure 20: Is it your understanding that you are eligible to receive unemployment compensation payments through your academic employer(s) when not teaching?

Section 14, Question 4

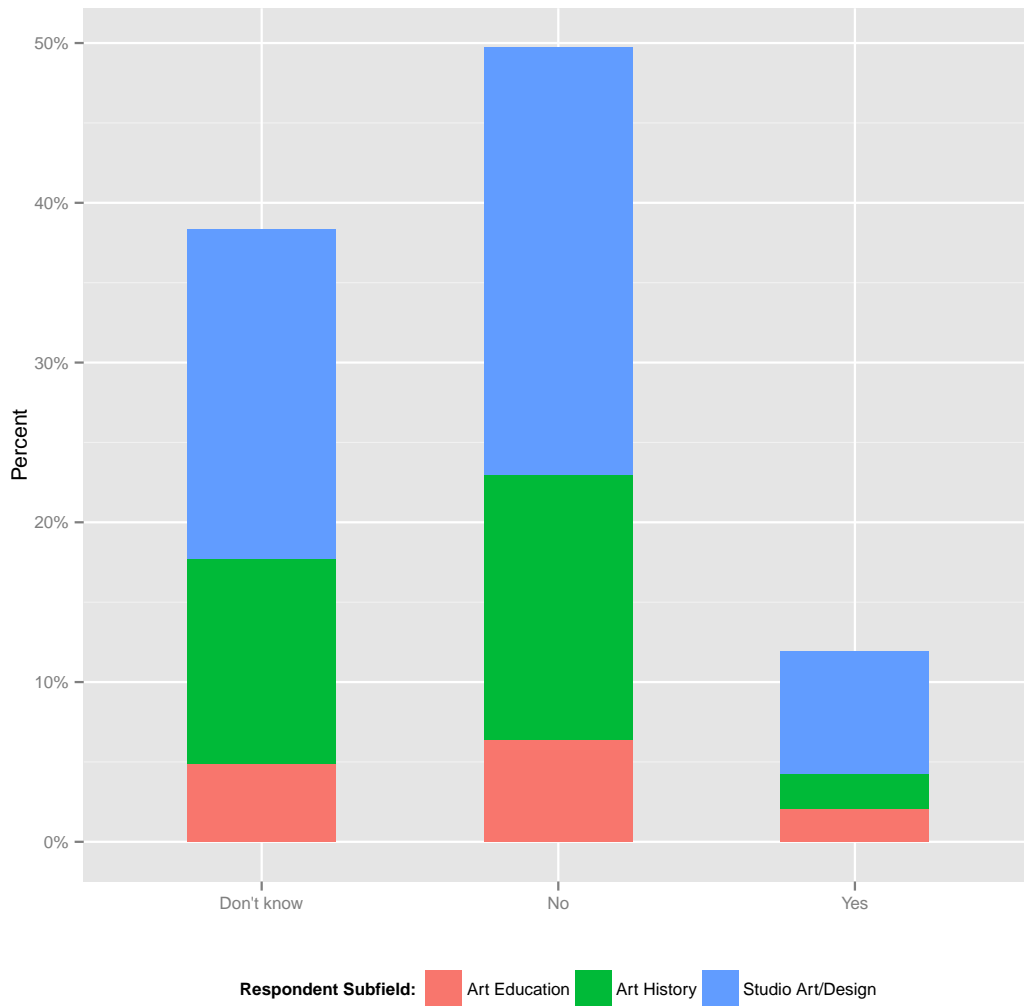


Figure 21: What do you consider your primary occupation?  
Section 15, Question 1

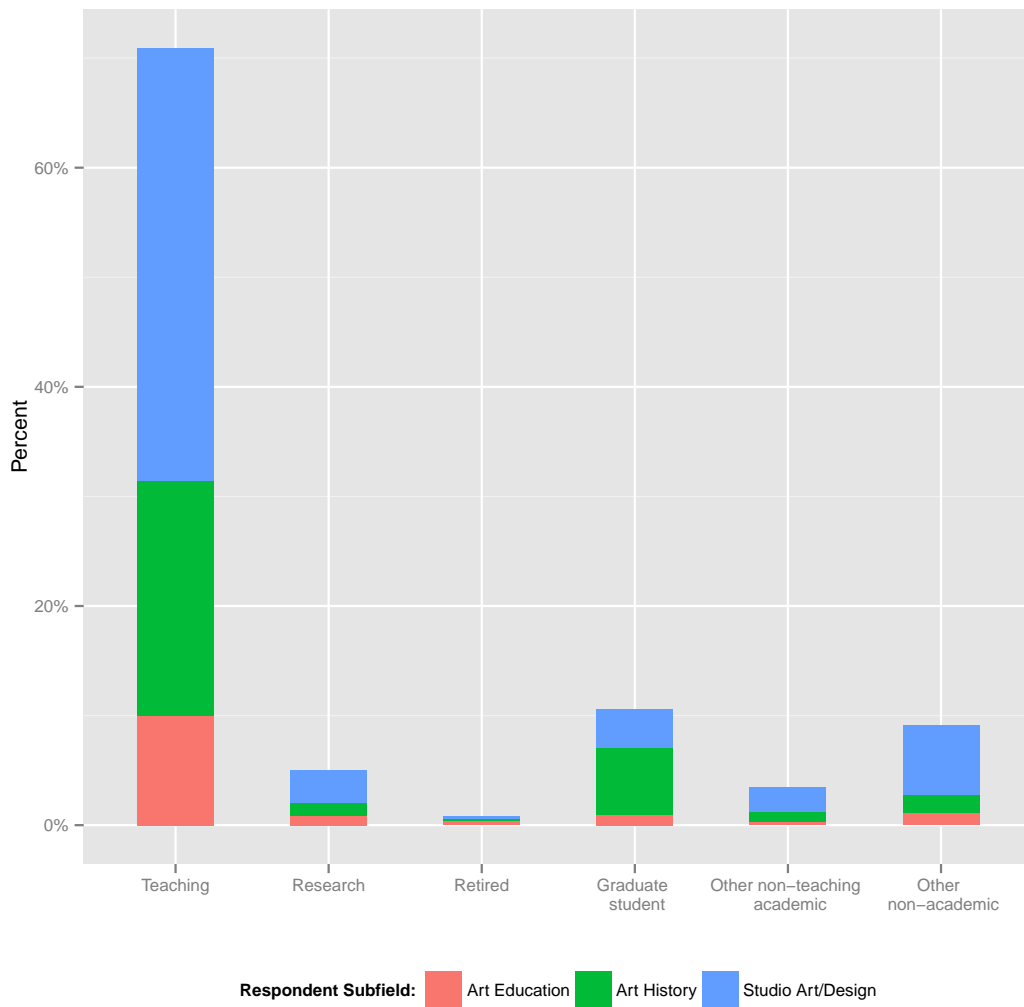


Figure 22: How many total years have you been employed in your primary occupation?  
Section 15, Question 2

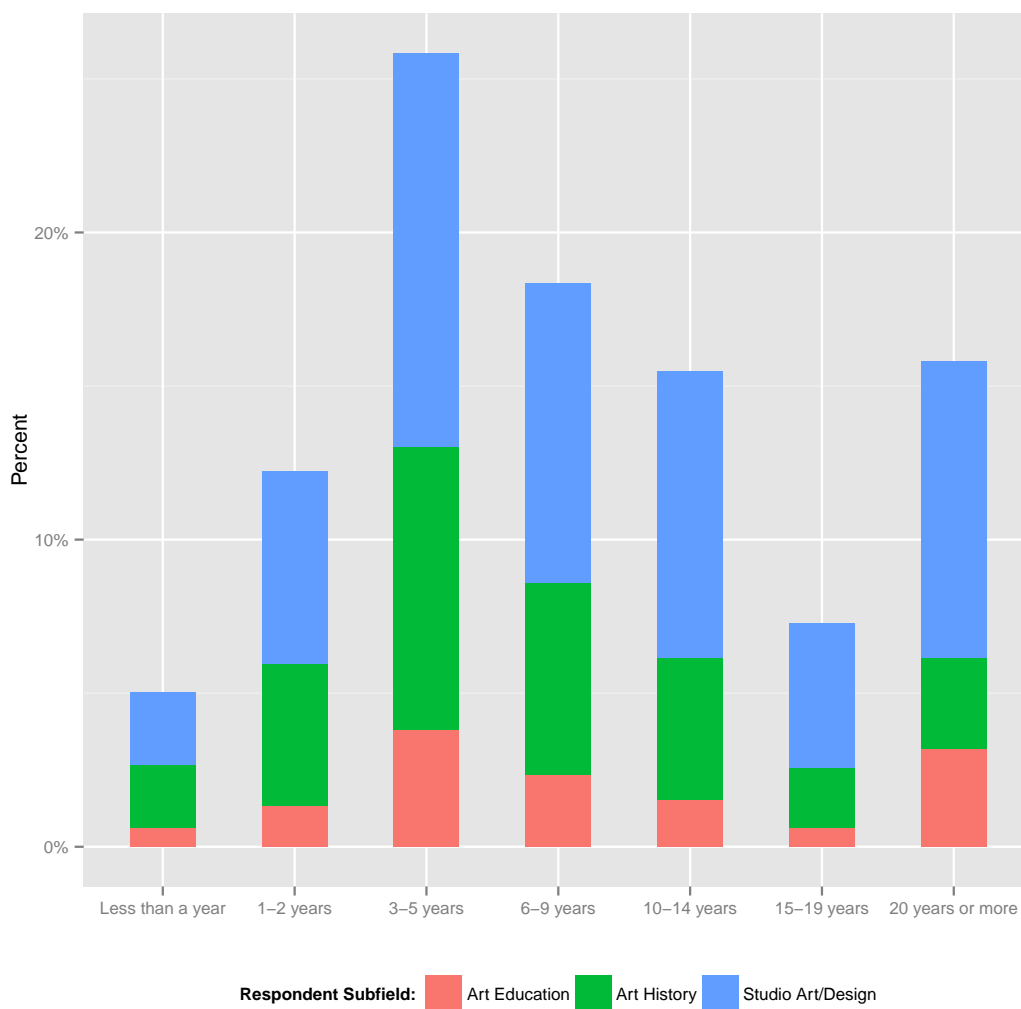


Figure 23: What do you consider your primary place of employment?  
 Section 15, Question 3

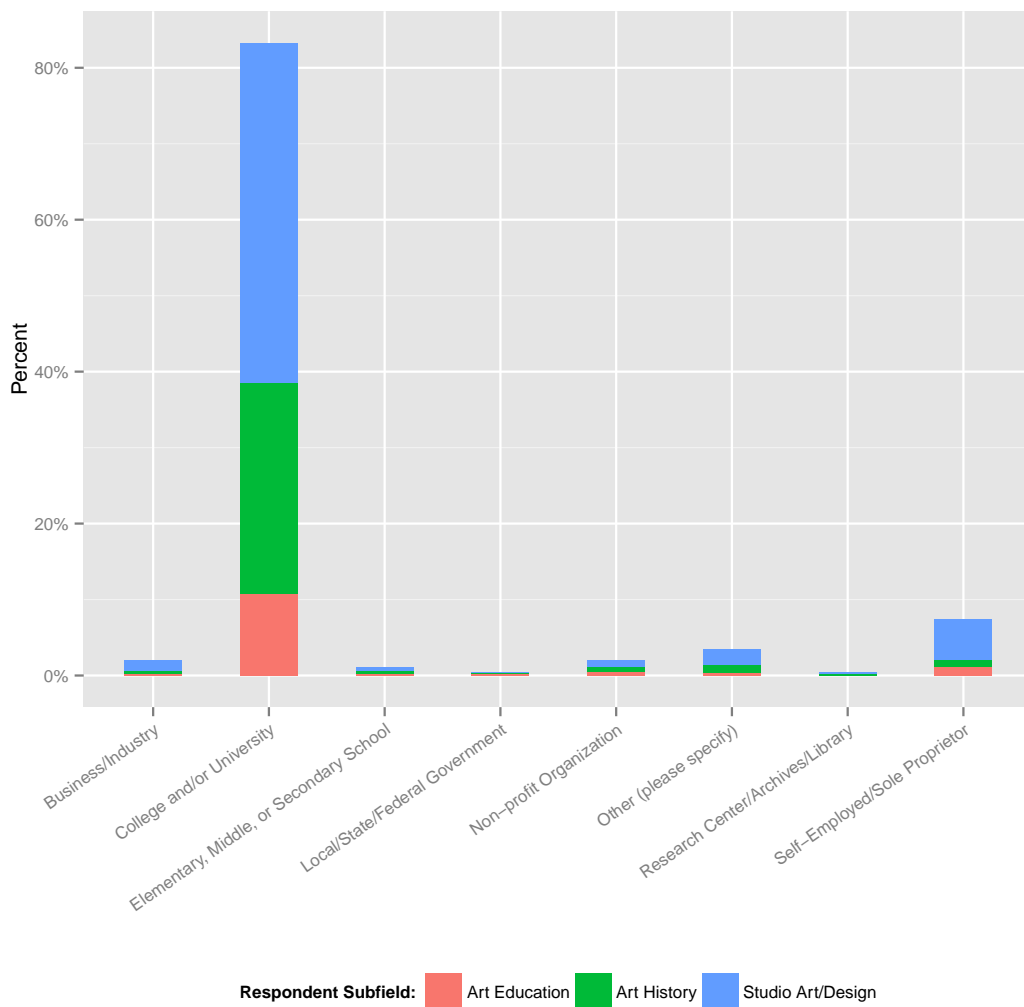


Figure 24: How important is your income from contingent instructional work to your total income?  
Section 15, Question 5

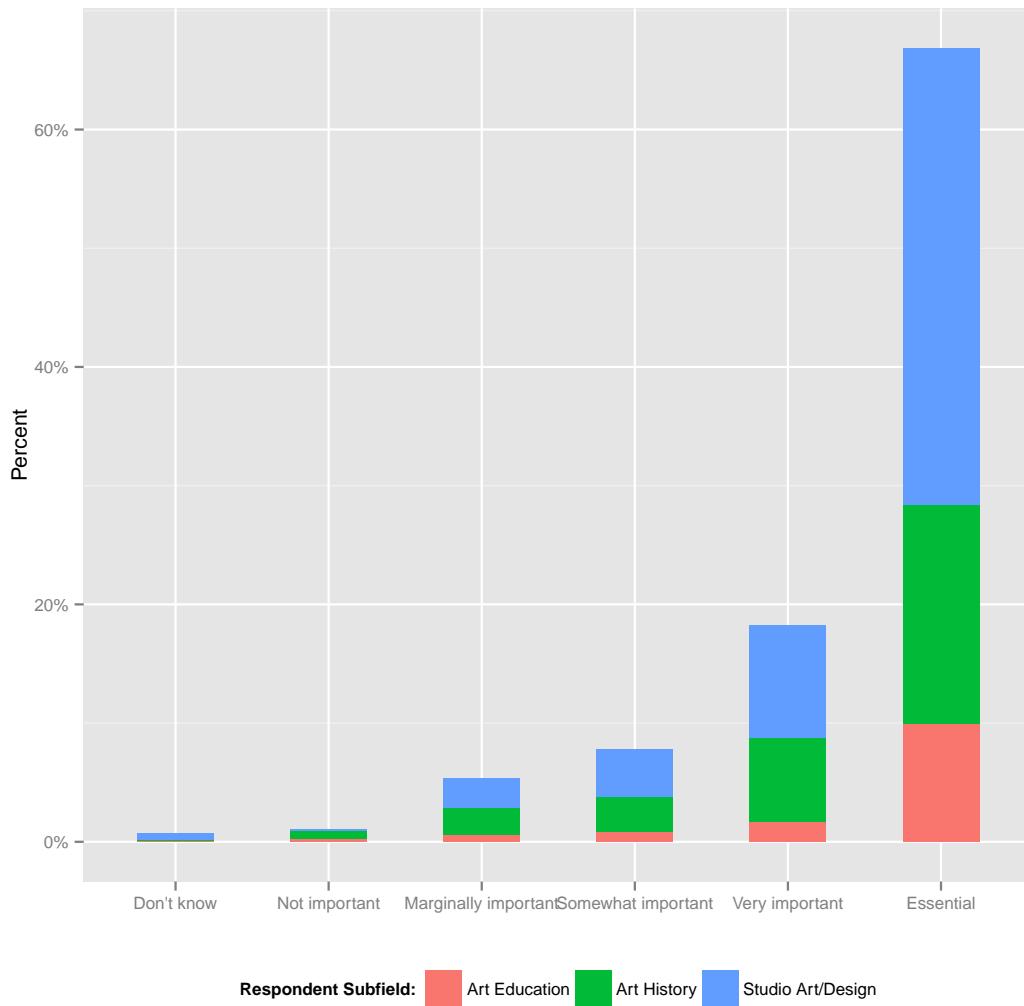


Figure 25: What is your age?  
Section 16, Question 3

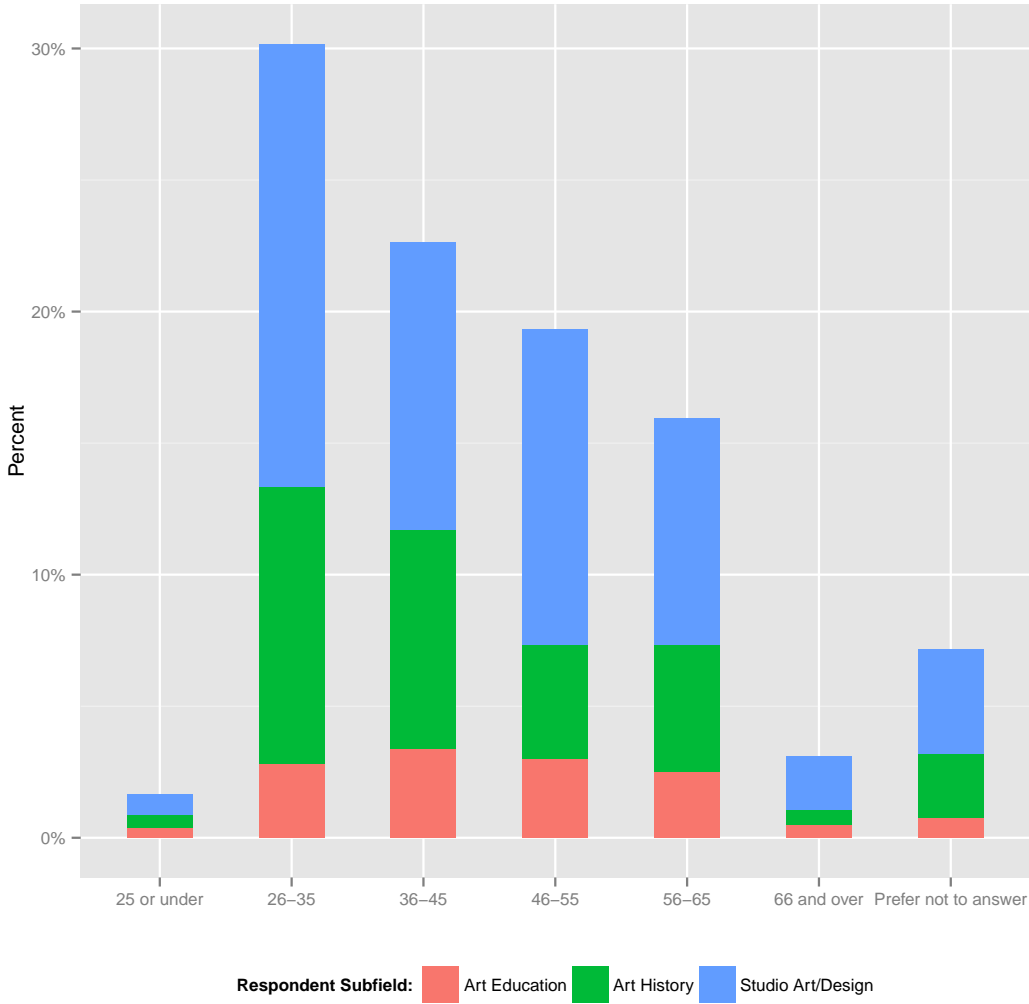


Figure 26: What is your highest educational attainment?  
Section 16, Question 4

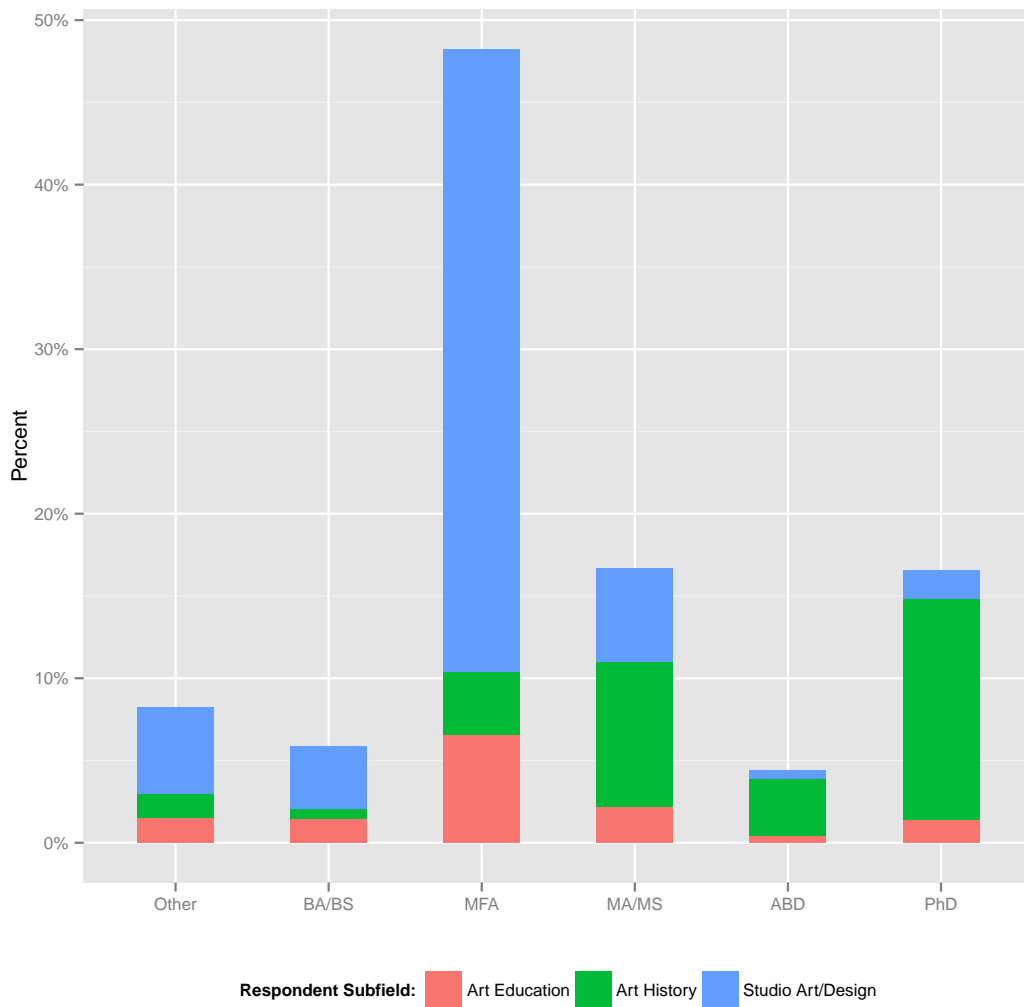


Figure 27: What is your gender?  
Section 16, Question 5

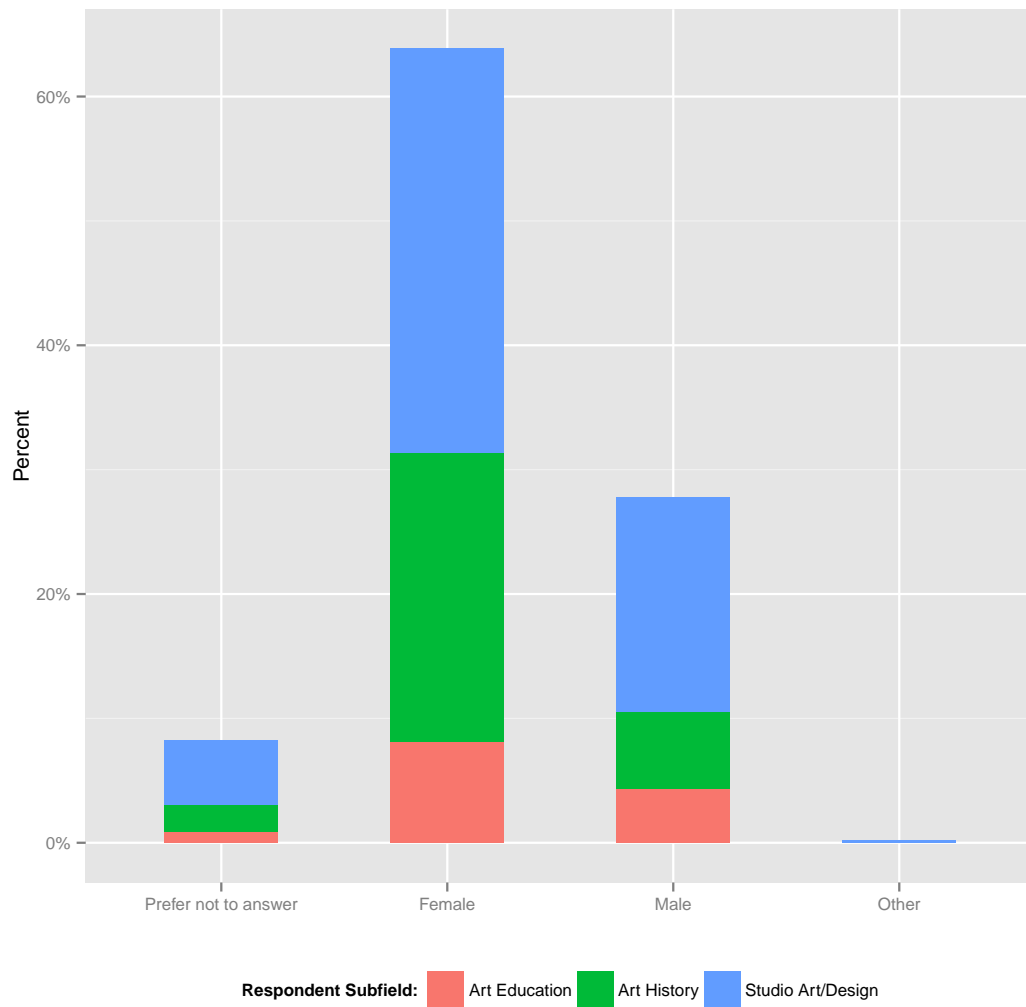




Figure 28: How do you identify yourself racially or ethnically?  
Section 16, Question 6

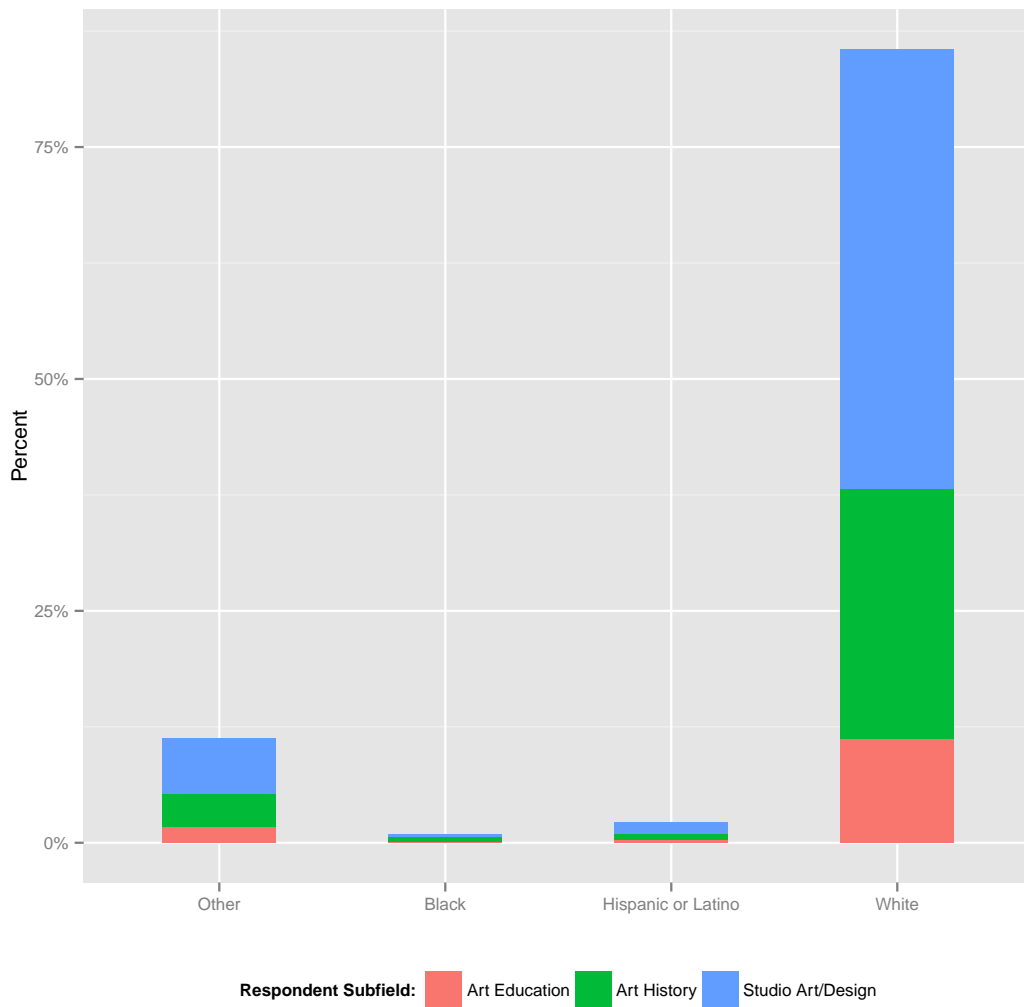


Figure 29: Are you currently enrolled in a graduate program?  
Section 16, Question 7

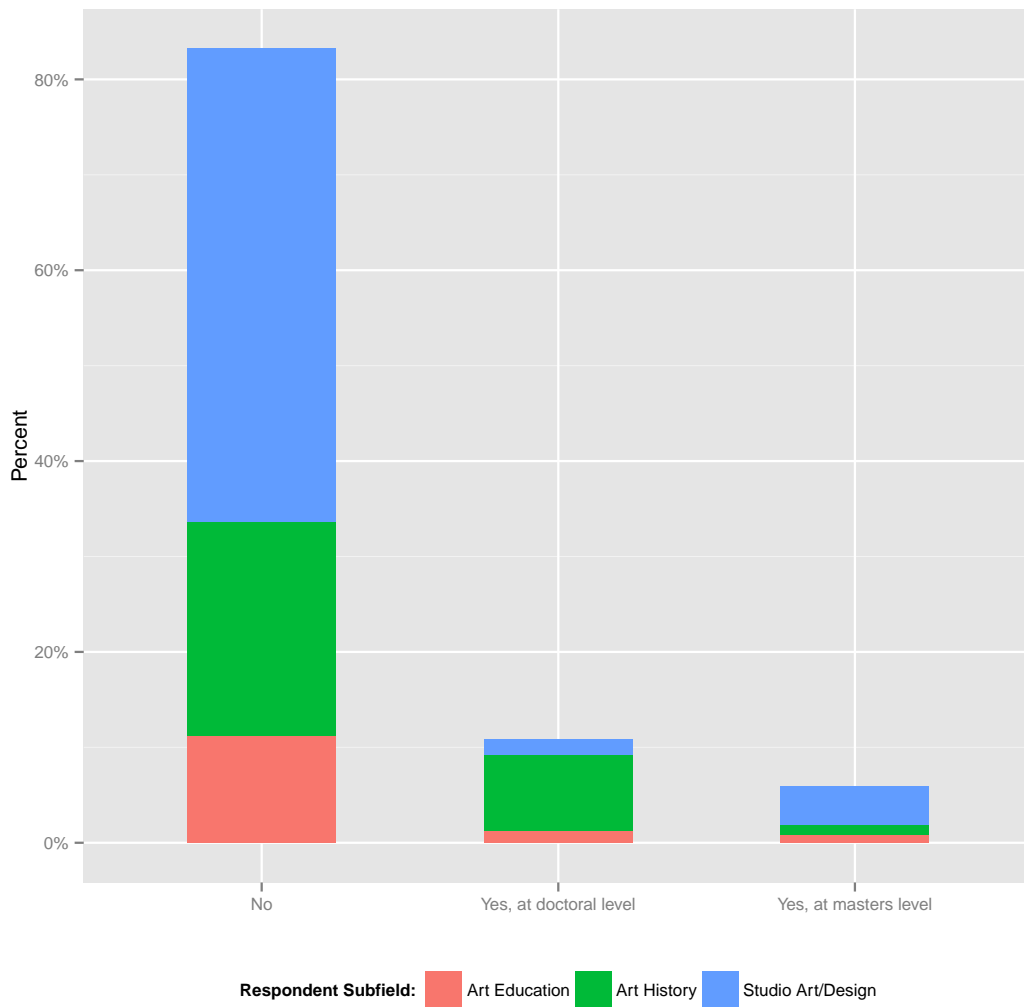


Figure 30: What was your approximate personal income in U.S. dollars before taxes in 2009?  
 Section 16, Question 7

